

Message Text

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GENEVA FOR WISNER

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SUBJ: ZAMBIAN PRESS ON STATE OF PLAY AT GENEVA -- NOV 17

REF: LUSAKA 3071

SUMMARY: DAILY PAPERS NOV 11 REPORTED EXTENSIVELY ON GENEVA DEVELOPMENTS, INCLUDING MUGABE'S TV INTERVIEW ON BBC, BRITISH SPOKESMAN'S REACTION TO PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF BRITISH WORKING PAPER ON ORGANIZATION OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT AND DEFENSE TALKS BEING HELD IN MAPUTO. BOTH PAPERS CARRIED EDITORIALS ON GENEVA TALKS, ONE CAUTIONING BRITISH AGAINST TRYING TO DIVIDE THE NATIONALISTS, THE OTHER WARNING THAT NATIONALIST TOUGHNESS MAY BE NON-PRODUCTIVE.

1. DAILY MAIL REPORTS PATRIOTIC FRONT'S REJECTION OF BRITISH PROPOSAL THAT INDEPENDENCE BE SET FOR MARCH 1,
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1978 OR POSSIBLY DECEMBER 1, 1977. ALSO NOTED IS MUGABE'S CRITICISM OF THE CHAIRMAN'S DISTRIBUTION OF

WORKING PAPER, "THE SHAPE OF THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT", AND RICHARD'S DENIAL THAT HE IS DISCRIMINATING AMONG THE DELEGATIONS IN PROVIDING INFORMATION IN ADVANCE. RICHARD'S BELIEF THAT TALKS WON'T BREAK DOWN AND FACT THAT RICHARD WILL CONTINUE ROUND OF PRIVATE TALKS WITH DELEGATIONS ARE COVERED. SEPARATE ACCOUNT CITES BRITISH SPOKESMAN'S DESCRIPTION OF BRITISH PAPER ON THE SHAPE OF A TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT AS A WORKING DOCUMENT, NOT A PROPOSAL OR PLAN. MUGABE'S SUSPICION, AIRED ON BBC TV, THAT BRITISH SEEKING TO HAND OVER POWER TO THE "RIGHT PEOPLE" IN RHODESIA IS GIVEN PROMINENT TREATMENT, AS IS LEGAL EXPERT, SIR ROBERT TREDGOLD'S COMPARISON OF THE RHODESIAN INDEMNITY AND COMPENSATION ACT WITH THE DRACONIAN SOUTH AFRICAN LAWS. SEPARATE ITEM NOTES ARRIVAL OF TANZANIAN AND ANGOLAN DELEGATIONS IN MAPUTO MONDAY FOR TALKS ON DEFENSE STRATEGY WITH DELEGATION FROM OTHER FRONT-LINE STATES.

2. DAILY MAIL EDITORIAL CAUTIONS THE BRITISH AGAINST PURSUING A COURSE OF TRYING TO DIVIDE THE NATIONALIST DELEGATIONS AS SMITH HAS DONE BY LABELING SITHOLE FLEXIBLE AND MUZOREWA AS REASONABLE. NATIONALISTS ARE ADVISED THEY HAVE THREE ALTERNATIVES: (A) SEEK VICTORY THROUGH WAR, (B) ADJOURN TALKS, AND (C) CONTINUE WITH THE TALKS WITH THE INTENT TO SEE THAT AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT IS FORMED TO STEER THE COUNTRY TO INDEPENDENCE BY DECEMBER 1, 1977.

3. TIMES OF ZAMBIA'S COVERAGE OF GENEVA RELATED DEVELOPMENTS IS BASICALLY SAME AS DAILY MAIL'S. HOWEVER, TIMES CARRIES ACCOUNT FROM SALISBURY OF THE SLAYING OF A WHITE FARMER IN THE VICTORIA FALLS AREA AND THE DEATH OF TWO RHODESIAN SOLDIERS IN TWO SEPARATE INCIDENT INVOLVING GUERRILLA FORCES. THERE IS ALSO REPORT FROM GABORONE OF BOTSWANA'S APPEAL FOR INTERNATIONAL HELP IN COPING WITH MORE THAN 500 STUDENTS FROM SOUTH AFRICA, WHO FLED TO BOTSWANA FOLLOWING SOWETO DISTURBANCES, AND FOR WHOM THERE ARE NO PLACES IN LOCAL SCHOOLS.

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4. TIMES' EDITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGED DIFFICULTY OF UNDERSTANDING MANEUVERING IN GENEVA FROM A DISTANCE, THEN ARGUES THAT RESPONSIBILITY OF NEGOTIATORS IS TO SEAL OFF THE NEAR-END OF A SLIDING TIME SCHEDULE. THE CONFERENCE MUST PRODUCE AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT BY THE END OF 1976 OR ALL OTHER DATES RUN THE RISK OF BEING OVERSHOT. THE NATIONALISTS ARE RESPONSIBLE TO THE PEOPLE OF RHODESIA, WHO WANT INDEPENDENCE NOW, TO RUSH THE BRITISH AND REBEL DELEGATIONS THROUGH THE NECESSARY MOTIONS AT THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE SPEED. THE CHALLENGE TO THE NATIONALISTS IS

TO CONQUER THE FAR DATE FOR INDEPENDENCE BY
CONQUERING THE NEARER DATE NOW. AT THE END, EDITORIAL
CAUTIONS THAT NON-PRODUCTIVE TOUGHNESS NOW ON THE DATE
ISSUE SUCCEEDS ONLY IN BUYING TIME FOR IAN SMITH
WHO HAS ALREADY LEFT THE CONFERENCE.
LOW

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